

# REVIEW

## OF THE

# STATE

## OF THE

# ENGLISH NATION.

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Thursday, February 21. 1706.

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**T**WAS a hard piece of Advice to give a Tradesman, which our last ended with, viz. **TO BREAK**; but I cannot forbear telling you, Gentlemen, it is upon the Maturest Consideration in the World, that I bring it up to this height, and lay it down as a Fundamental Maxim in the present State of Trade; the only Destruction of Trade in this Nation, is not the *Breaking* of our Tradesmen, but *their not Breaking*, viz. That when Men find in Trade, they cannot stand, but are Declining in Stock, the Capital sunk, their Credit sinking, and the Bottom Nought, yet they will struggle to the last Moment, and like the Drowning Man, chat Tyr'd with Swimming, and quite spent, when he can hold up his Head no longer above Water, yet he swims even

under Water, while he is, as it were, struggling, and in his last Pangs; they will run through all the Extremities, till at last Desperation seizes them, and then like a Hunted Stag, they stand at Bay with their Creditors, and do them all the Mischief they can; the Stag indeed, like a Generous Beast, when he finds the Speed fail, and the Merciless Hounds at his Heels, bravely Faces them, and Dyes Resisting; but 'tis plain, that Courage is the last Effort of Fear; and would he Exert that Bravery, before he had spent his Strength in a Cowardly flight; there would be no such thing as Hunting him, *the Dogs would be useless*; Pardon, the Allusion, Gentlemen. Would Men in Trade, Treat with their Creditors early, *the Hounds*, the Commissioners I would say, would be useless, Sta-

Statutes would Dye of Course; *this Barbarous and Bloody Act*, for I can call it no other, of Inmuring Men Alive, Starving Innocent People, and Torturing Families, would, to the Eternal Scandal of the Contrivers, be Damn'd, as it deserves, as a Practice not heard of, in any Nation in the World.

I cannot but say, I believe the Contrivers of that Law, aim'd at Exposing this Nation to the World: That we being formerly a People Famous for Generosity and Mercy, to the Miserable; that Abominated Cruelty, even to the worst Malefactors; that Upbraid the *Scots* with their *Boots and Thumplings*, and the *Dutch*, with the Cruelties of *Amboyna*, should shelter the Bloodiest Design, that ever Christian Nation Harbour'd under the Cover of a Law, for *Regulating Prisons*, and the passing this Law, without regard to the Destruction of so many Thousand Miserable Families, as must first and last Perish by it, is to me a farther Testimony, how little those People are Back'd to Compassion, who had then the Conduct of Publick Affairs.

There are some Acts of Parliament in England, with what Design made, I am not to Examine, which carry in them something so odd, that it shocks Mankind in the Execution; 'tis hard we should have any Laws in such a Nation as this, *this pretends to so much Justice*, that it should be Scandalous for any Man to make use of; and yet perhaps, I could give a great many Instances of this kind, and particularly, that we Call, *the Statute of Limitations*; how many Men are there in Town, who, if a Man takes the Advantage of that Statute, and Pleads it to a just Debt, freely call him a Rogue, a Villain, that deserves to be Insulted in the Streets, and *Can'd for a Rascal*; and yet this Law is made Sacred, by King, Lords, and Commons, in the several Acts, for Discovery of Frauds, in all Penal Laws, whether Pecuniary or Sanguinary; how Scandalous is the Title of an Informer, no Honest Man can bear it. And when for the Reward, some stoop to the Mean Employment, how do Gentlemen Contemn their Persons, Despise their Ac-

quaintance, and care not to be seen in their Company, even those very Men, that have in a manner, sav'd the Nation, by Discoveries of Plots, Assassinations, and Conspiracies, against our Government and Kings? how do even those People, who acknowledge the Service done, yet slight the Person, and think them Men of Baseness and Dishonour, that when they have their Reward, are fit to be laid aside.

In the Case of the Law, I am Discouraging of, it already begins to be Counted, the Test of a Man of Blood, and Barbarity; to put it in Execution, Entitles a Man to the Character of Inhumane, and in a few Years, it will of Course grow so Universally Condemn'd, that no Men of Honesty or Humanity will be seen to make use of it.

To talk of Humanity and Mercy, and Confine Men to Perpetual Imprisonment for Debt, and that Men who cannot pay too, as well as they that can, Men Ruin'd by known Disaster, as well as Men of Fraud; to put Men to Torture and Famine, and neither let them Work to Pay, nor to Live; to smother Men in Noysome Dungeons, and Crowd them with Murderers and Thieves; to Condemn them to the Temporal Hell of a Gaol, and barr them up from all the helps of Art, Industry, and Time to Restore their Families, and pay: For Shame, let us no more Reproach the *Dutch*, *Amboyna is a Fool to this*; and though I thank God, I neither fear nor value all the Efforts of my Numerous Enemies this way, yet I would be of Mr. *Tutbing's* Mind in another Case, and cannot but Applaud his Experiment; I should Petition the Parliament to make it  *felony*, and that they would Remedy this Barbarous Mischief, by the *Coup de Grace*, of the Gallows; but I shall take more Freedom with this Matter hereafter.

I am now Addressing my self to the Tradesmen that yet stand upon their Feet, and tho' struggling with Difficulties, in Trade, yet appear good Men; God knows how many thousand Families I am now talking to, that Live well, Ride in Coaches, and Enjoy the outside of Happiness, and no Man can say to them, *thou art the Man*. Well, Gentlemen,

Gentlemen,



Gentlemen, if you will ever hearken to Advice for your Good, let it be to this, *stop in time*, and be not Dismay'd at Consequences; let Laws and Cruelties of Creditors be what they will, *stop in time*, 'tis far easier to make up; and you will make much better Terms, when you can Pay 15 s. in the Pound, than 25. 6d. Creditors are never Un-

kind, when a Man discovers his Condition early, shows them the Honest Man, and their loss is but small. If you would not be quite undone, venture to be *undone*, early; Time will recover you, Good Usage will Cure you, but Running all to the last Extremity, Ruines both Debtor and Creditor.

## MISCELLANEA.

**I**N my last, I shew'd the Necessity I was under, from the Violence of other Men's Malice, to justify the Moderation of this Paper.

I do believe no Man, ought to study other Mens Infirmities, and to Expose all Mens Errors, is an Office no Man can desire, for the sake of it; I think the true end of Satyr, is for *Reformation*, and I freely Renounce all manner of Invidious Reproachings. I have conceal'd a Thousand times more Follies, Crimes, Vices, and Ridiculous Actions, of even my worst Enemies, than I have Expos'd, and in this, I value my self upon my *Moderation*, that I Expose none, but what I think Incorrigible, and who first really Expose themselves, seem past Shame, Advice or Correction; and with these I think my self not ty'd up to Rules.

Now, tho' I resolve never to make any Truce with Vice, or with the Men of Vice, yet while I have been Inviting all Men to Party-Peace, and to promote the Publick Tranquillity; I have, to prompt the Exhortation, by my own Example, *restrain'd my Pen*, in giving the Scandalous Histories of those People, whose Practice has been Notorious, in the Opposing the Good of their Native Country.

And first, as to *History's of Fall*, I have Suppress'd the History of above 27 several Elections in *England*, in which the Horrible Scenes of High Church Rage, would have been so Manifest, the particulars would have

been so Scandalous, not to the Person's concern'd only, but to the whole Party, that they who have but the least Inclination to Peace, and Silence, cannot but Confess me Civil to them.

Secondly, as to Instances of the Inferiour Clergy and Magistrates, in the several Parts of *England*, and of their Prodigious Behaviour, of which I have Collected about six and twenty Hundred Examples, in which their Conduct, would suffer Indelible Scandal; I have Suppress'd the Opportunities, I have had of Exposing them; have not only forbore the Publication, but have never so much as shown the Dimm'd Particulars in Conversation; in hopes, Argument for Peace, Experience, or some turn of Affairs might open their Eyes, and Reproach should not lye in the way of their Repentance.

I am Sorry, that to justify the Truth of this, I am Oblig'd to break in upon this Method, and must Expose somebody to give them a Specimen, how easy it is to Expose the rest; but since it must be so, I leave the World to judge of the Moderation I speak of, in my hitherto forbearing, to relate the following Story.

From *Okehampton in Devonshire*.  
One *Quint*, a Labouring and very Honest, Useful Man, was Serrant to a certain Tradesman in the Town, who had a Right in the Burrough to Vote for Burgesses at the last Election: This Tradesman being known nor